

2000 OREGON WEATHER AND CROP REVIEW ^{1/}

JANUARY

The unexpected dry weather the last half of December changed suddenly at the end of the month as the first in a series of storms reached Oregon. The wet, stormy weather continued for much of January. In general, the month was milder and wetter than normal.

FEBRUARY

Most of Oregon had above normal temperatures and was wetter than average. Most of Oregon also remained above normal for the Water Year, although some rather large areas in eastern Oregon were still below normal.

MARCH

Most temperatures were slightly below normal, a pattern that persisted statewide. The majority of Oregon had below normal precipitation. Fruit tree blossom began. Onion and early potato seeding began. Calving and lamb season was winding down toward the end of the month.

APRIL

April was rather wet across southern Oregon and along the eastern border, and drier than average elsewhere. Pastures were in excellent condition. The month was very warm throughout Oregon for field preparation and spring planting. Fruit trees were in full bloom. Farmers planted spring grains and vegetables, including potatoes. Wholesale nurseries moved both container and balled and burlapped material.

MAY

Western Oregon had mostly above normal precipitation totals as a steady supply of moist, stormy weather from the Pacific brought numerous rainy days. Mild eastside temperatures prevented thunderstorm activity from firing up, so eastern Oregon remained mostly drier than average. Rain kept most western area farmers and ranchers from their fields and orchards, although the rain was beneficial for grass growth. Grass seed headed, potatoes and sugarbeets emerged.

JUNE

There was an early transition from cool, wet, spring-like weather to warm, summer-like weather. Later, there was a significant heat wave that affected all of western Oregon during the last week in June. Haying was in full swing. Cherry harvest began in the west while strawberry harvest peaked in the Willamette Valley. Rains extended the grazing season. Wheat and barley headed.

JULY

The month began with rather cool, wet weather. Several days in early July had significant thunderstorm activity. Mid-

July had generally seasonable temperatures, although strong sea breezes kept coastal sections cool. Haying continued statewide. Caneberry picking was at its peak. Cranberries were turning red. The vegetable harvest began. Hops reached top wire. Livestock movement to summer ranges was completed.

AUGUST

Warm summer weather prevailed early in the month throughout Oregon (with the exception of coastal areas, which were characteristically cool). After six weeks of dry weather, rain finally fell in northwest Oregon. August totals remained well below normal, however. Grains, vegetables, grass seed, potatoes, onions, and pears were harvested. A bad fire season accompanied dry pasture conditions in eastern Oregon.

SEPTEMBER

September was mostly drier than average (with some notable exceptions in eastern Oregon, where thunderstorms brought some significant downpours), with near-normal temperatures. The first snows of the season fell at higher elevations (above 6,000 feet). Field preparations were underway for fall planting. Easter lily bulb harvest was in full swing. The hop and red clover harvest was winding down. Western Oregon saw some fourth alfalfa cuttings. Sheapordy potatoes were harvested in Malheur County.

OCTOBER

Early October was rather unremarkable in western Oregon. Generally the weather was mild, dry, and "fall-like." Sub-freezing temperatures were common, with a few spots dropping into the teens. Dry mid month weather gave way to wet conditions at the end of the month as the first "big winter storm" of the season hit the Northwest. Most fall seeding was complete. Storage onions and potato harvest was complete as was the apple and the cranberry harvest.

NOVEMBER

A persistent ridge of high pressure caused November to be much cooler and drier than normal throughout Oregon. Mid-month temperatures were mild, a far cry from the record cold of the week before. Most of eastern Oregon was mild, although southeast Oregon saw some very cold nighttime lows. Most fall seeded crops emerged. Christmas trees were harvested. Fall calving was underway. Sheep and cattle were moved to winter pastures.

DECEMBER

The high pressure ridge that dominated November weather persisted for much of December as well. Nearly every location in Oregon had below-normal precipitation, but unusually clear skies caused temperatures to be generally above average.

^{1/} Weather source: Oregon Climate Service <http://www.ocs.orst.edu>